

Safety Committee Report October 2008

Local PTAs are encouraged to have a Safety Chair, especially if your school has issues that include bullying, gangs, safety and security of school buildings and school grounds, pedestrian safety issues, or poor building and portable conditions which can affect the health and safety of our children and teachers.

Resolution on Background Checks: The Resolution on Background Checks was referred to the Safety Committee and discussion was completed at the September Delegates Assembly. Because arrests are shared nationwide and the MCPS HR Department has access to the database and receives notification of employee arrests, the committee found no reason for the Resolution to move forward, which called for a periodic fingerprinting/background check of staff.

Recess Supervision: The Safety Committee will meet with Director of Systemwide Safety Programs, Pam Montgomery to find out how MCPS currently trains and allocates it's staff at recess time. Last year, MCCPTA advocated for additional recess aides. If we want to be effective this year, we need to do more research and gather more facts to support our request. Some parents have suggested fencing around the playground as a safety measure.

Pedestrian Safety: We need to gather information from local schools where crossing areas are dangerous. ***PTAs are encouraged to email Laurie Halverson if they are concerned about pedestrian safety in their schools-please provide detailed information on exact location and why you are concerned, and any incidents that have occurred.*** In November of 2007, MCCPTA passed a resolution to advocate for more crossing guards in middle schools. Salaries for crossing guards come from the MCPD budget, not the MCPS budget.

Bullying and Teasing: HB 199 passed which is legislation for Maryland schools to have a bullying preventive program. MSDE is charged with developing a model plan by March 2009 and counties must implement a program after that date. The MCCPTA Safety Committee will work with the MCCPTA Legislative Committee to keep MCCPTA members informed and may suggest jointly how best to advocate at state level during model plan development. We have received contact information at the state level and will be in touch with them throughout the year.

Air Quality: Indoor Air Quality is currently not listed as a Safety category in the MCPS budget. Poorly maintained portables and buildings lead to poor indoor air quality which affect the safety and health of our children and teachers. MCPS currently leases portables that meet the bare minimum of specifications and have design flaws that allow water to penetrate. ***If PTAs are concerned about the condition of their buildings or portables, you are encouraged to take a picture of visible problems***

and share it with Laurie Halverson who will gather the pictures to help us advocate for better maintenance and better quality portables.

Laurie Halverson
MCCPTA Safety Committee Chair
Lauriehalverson@verizon.net